HOLLY BERRIES

Holly berries, holly berries,
Red and bright and beaming
Through the dusky evergreens
Like sprays of coral gleaming,
Ye have power to fill the heart
With memories of glee,
Oh, what happy thoughts can cling
Round the holly tree!

When I see the holly berries
I fancy that I hear
Merry chimes and carols sweet
Ringing in my ear.
Christmas, with its blazing fires
And happy hearths, I see,
Oh, what merry thoughts can cling
Round the holly tree!

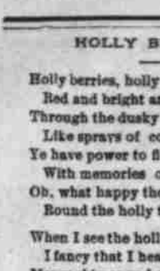
Bring the glowing holly berries,
Snow is lying deep;
All the gay and blooming flowers
Till the springtime sleep,
Let them grace our happy homes
With their crimson light,
Mingling with the somber fir,
And the laurel bright.

Keenly blows the icy wind,
Shorter grows the day,
Winter scatters cold and gloom
In his dreary play,
Yet we love the closing years
For the joy they bring,
And the holy memories
That round the holly cling.

Holly berries, holly berries,
Red and bright and beaming,
Through the dusky evergreens
Like sprays of coral gleaming;
Ye have power to fill the heart
With memories of glee,
Ah, what happy thoughts can cling
Round the holly tree!

"LEFTY."

A CHRISTMAS STORY.



CERTAINLY he was a woe-begone object as he rode up to the Rita Blanca ranch house. His clothes were in rags; his immature freckled face sharp with anxiety and possibly with hunger.

The diminutive gray pony he rode seemed to share in his dejection; man and beast looked as though life had used them ill, and turned to them only its harshest side.

Clark Sargent was manager of the Rita Blanca, which was owned by an English company. It was a clean, well run, closely managed concern, and a very unpromising place for shirks, sweaters or loafers of any sort.

Clark himself was sitting on the porch as this forlorn-looking pair came up.

"No," he said in reply to a request for work, "we're not taking on any hands now." Then, as he noted the look of abject despair that settled upon the thin face, "get down and rest and have some dinner. You look sick."

"No, I ain't sick," was the answer hastily and anxiously given. "I hain't been sick. I'm jest tired an' hungry. I been ridin' all day."

Clark had just come in from where all the headquarters hands, including the cook (for your genuine ranch cook is always a rider, too, and quite as liable as not to be the best broncho buster and handler of cattle in the force) were gathering two-year-olds for shipment, and there was no one at the ranch house but himself.

As he set out some cold grub and put the coffee pot on the stove he glanced at the man from time to time. Something in the meager form—that looked like a boy's only because it was not strong and well-nourished enough for a man's—touched his sympathies.

"Why, you are not able to do a cowboy's work," he said, speaking almost sharply, because he was annoyed with himself for feeling inclined to employ the poor fellow against his business instincts and for pity's sake alone.

"O, yes, I am, sir. I'm a heap abler than what I look. I'm used to it. I been out in more northers, an' worked to stop more stampedes than I've got fingers an' toes. I can stand anything, if I c'u'd jest git a stiddy job. I been out of work—ain't had no stiddy job for six months; that's what's used me up so."

The end of it was that Clark put Thompson—or Lefty, the sobriquet his lefthandedness had earned for him in the free and easy style of the plains, where a man's conspicuous feature or trait dubs him on the force; and he was started out on regular range work the next morning.

There was no complaint from the boss of any lack of ability, capacity or energy on Lefty's part; and no remarks of any kind from Lefty himself. He seemed only too well satisfied, and most anxious to please.

But one morning, when Clark was riding across the Minneosa pasture, he saw one of his cowboys dismounted and sitting on the ground beside his pony, which was grazing. As the figure remained motionless, he rode nearer to see what was the matter, and recognized in the crouched form, with its head on his knees, Lefty.

He called to him by name. Lefty raised his face, wiping his mouth furtively.

"I git a little dizzy, sometimes," he said appealingly, "when I ride right hard; I ain't hurt, Mr. Sargent; I ain't sick."

"Good God, boy," said Clark, looking at the blood spatters on the brown plains grass, and on the shirt front which the other was trying vainly to cover with that trembling left hand, "you've had a hemorrhage! Go right up to the house as soon as you can."

Lefty staggered to his feet, and stood clinging to his saddle-horn, in a pitiful effort to pull himself together, and look all right.

"Mr. Sargent," he said, beseechingly, "this ain't nothin'; it don't interfere with my work none; an' you don't know how bad I hate to be knockin' about from one place to another."

"Why, Lefty," said Clark, horrified, "you don't think I wanted to discharge you! Here, let me help you up on the horse, and I'll lead him in."

Clark had a medicine chest, a fair practical knowledge of the effect of drugs, and considerable tact in their use. Lefty, of course, was burning out—but slowly in this high, dry air, so unfavorable to the development of his disease; and Clark doctored him faithfully with tonics and palliatives.

He was not sent out on the range again; work was found for him about the house, and he soon came to be cook and general domestic manager. He developed into a skilful housekeeper and his cooking saved much of the customary wear and tear of the boys' moral natures. Indeed, Fletch Phillips declared that it was a more potent means of grace than the exhortations of the cowboy evangelist over at Lone Jack.

But it was to Sargent's especial comfort and welfare that his loving services were watchfully devoted.

The pegs and gun racks in the office room at the Rita Blanca are all gleaming buffalo horns, picked up on the plain by Lefty, with the weather worn bark of years of exposure on them, and patiently scraped down and polished till they look like little half crescents of jet. He searched out, polished and put up, too, the great spreading cattle horns over the office doors and windows. Clark likes to hunt, and the heads and skins of deer, antelope, coyotes and big "loafer" wolves that he has shot, stuffed and mounted, or stretched and tanned by Lefty's skilful hands, adorn the walls and floor.

Clark's pony, his saddle, spurs and all his equipments and accouterments were kept in the shining and speckless condition of a crack cavalryman's; and his clothing was searched for rents and missing buttons with the eagerness of a young wife, new to her duties.

Lifted out of vagabondage into a comfortable home, and freed from the haunting dread of losing it; simply pleased, like a child, at being a valued factor in the comfort of that home, Lefty, whose springtime had been nipped and chilled by adversity's northers, came into late blossom. His face filled out and bloomed till it looked like a young boy's.

In this fostering atmosphere he put forth numberless entertaining little accomplishments; he discovered unsuspected graces and developed the cheerful optimism of the consumptive. His cough was always "better," and he was mildly impatient of any inquiry as to his health, assuming the attitude of a great stout fellow who ought to be out on the range earning his way, but who accepted these lighter duties because they were of a sort unpopular with the others.

Notwithstanding this, he took faithfully the medicines Clark gave him, as he would have taken, done or endured anything asked or imposed upon him from that quarter.

But there was one medicine Clark could not get him to take; and it was a tonic upon which he placed the most reliance in such a case—plenty of whisky.

"No, Mr. Sargent," he said, "don't give me none o' that. Whisky an' me's bad friends."

"Why, Lefty, that's mighty queer. I know you've drank plenty of whisky before now."

"Yes, sir; an' it's what I'll never do again; it's been my worst enemy. I've been in with rustlers an' all kinds o' thieves when I was drinkin', an' I didn't get no good by my meanness, neither. Whisky starved me an' froze me as long as I stuck to it, an' that's what it'll do for any man that loves it like I do."

As Lefty said this he looked carefully away from his employer. Clark's drinking habit was the one gnawing anxiety and distress that he had.

It had been growing steadily worse since Lefty came to the Rita Blanca. It used to be that Clark only drank to excess when he went to Antelope, where there were bar rooms and convivial companions; but now the buckboard could not be got ready for a drive of a day or two across the country without a jug of whisky in it.

Lefty's own bitter experience, to certain passages in which—the most shameful and criminal—he always referred with open simplicity, gave him an appreciation and horror of the declivity upon which the other was starting; and he only lacked the courage to speak.

When Clark was beginning on one of his sprees Lefty's beseeching eyes would follow him, only to drop humbly when they met his look; and the silent protest and entreaty was as well understood between them as words could have been.

Lefty stood between him and publicity so far as was possible, and lessened by his own watchfulness and care the terrible risks Clark ran when drinking. It came to be the regular thing that whenever the buckboard was brought out for one of the manager's trips, Lefty got old Hank Pearsall to take charge of the house and the cooking while he drove for Clark. It was only so that he felt at ease, for then he knew that whatever maudlin reaching for the lines or slashing at the half-broke broncho team there was, he was there to take care of Clark, who had more than once of late rolled out of the buckboard, and Lefty had had hard work, what with the wild team and Clark's helplessness, to get him back in.

One lowering December afternoon they stopped at Antelope for the mail, on their way home from a distant ranch. Things had been going better; it was weeks since Clark's last spree, and he had been doing almost entirely without liquor. But it was Christmas Eve; every bar room was full of cowboys and ranchmen, drinking and hilarious.

Clark would have the team put up and fed, and they themselves had supper at the Antelope House.

When Lefty went to him in the bar, after supper, Clark would have come, but there was a crowd around him that wouldn't hear of it. Finally, annoyed at Lefty's persistence, they turned their attention to him, and it was only by the exercise of considerable dexterity and address that he got out without having to drink with them.

Full of anxiety, he went back again and again, sometimes finding Clark determined to make a night of it, sometimes half sobered up and willing to go, but when on the strength of this he got the horses out and brought the buckboard around, he always failed by a little to get Clark away.

Once he got him in and they drove as far as the outskirts of the town, when Clark turned obstinate and made him go back.

Finally, long after midnight, when he went again into the bar, Clark said he would go with him if Lefty would take one drink. Hoping to pacify and get him away Lefty finally took the drink; then, on a similar plea and promise, another and another, till by the time they left they were about equally intoxicated.

When they came to the first gate into the Rita Blanca pastures, about three miles from the ranch house, Lefty gave the lines to Clark and got down to open it, the whip unheeded, in his hand.

But the long drive in the sharp air had sobered him up enough that he wondered to see the tall posts on each side of the gate moving. The next moment he knew that there was a man behind each post, it being the only possible cover an assailant could have found for miles upon that bare, open, half moonlit plain. The revelation was like a bucket of ice water dashed over him, and he gussed instantly—with a throb of that anxiety for Clark which was always with him—that these were some of the Mexicans with whom the Rita Blanca was having trouble.

His mortal fear for Clark's life swept the befogging fumes out of his brain.

It was Clark's life they wanted; he knew that; it was not himself they were after. He could go forward and open the gate safely, since they likely thought him too drunk to notice them.

But if they knew that the one in the buckboard was Clark, they would jump upon it and knife him as he drove through.

Lefty reeled toward the gate, caught it and clung to it, shaking in every limb. The silent watchers behind the posts might well have thought him very drunk indeed.

Even while his poor spent frame drooped shuddering against the gate, his single and undeviating mind ran desperately through every possible scheme to save Clark.

They were of much the same height and size—enough so to be mistaken in the semi-darkness. Why not make it seem—why not—

He tore the gate open with a lurch and flung it wide—"Lefty!" he screamed, "Lefty! Drive for your life, Lefty!" And as the excitable team of cow ponies, trained to run at the shout, swept through at a gallop, he slashed the rear horse with his whip. The outfit whirled away like a cloud, while Lefty turned to face Clark's fate.

When Clark Sargent, thoroughly sobered, got the wild ponies pulled down, turned around and drove back to the gate, there was nothing in sight on the great, gray, glimmering level but a dark, motionless heap by one of the gate posts.

He flung his lines over the post, went and knelt beside the still body.

"Lefty," he whispered, with his heart in his throat.

There was no answer. He found the man's shoulders, lifted them, and straightened him out—it was Lefty.

Clark raised him gently, and felt for the wounds that were soaking his clothes with blood. Lefty moaned and opened his eyes.

"O, Mr. Sargent, I'm going to die; and who'll take care of you then, when—when you're drinking. "Who is it knows like me that's been through it, the hell you're a walkin' right down into! And who'll be willin' to go with you, faithful, through the worst of it all, like I'd a been glad an' proud to? Nobody! Nobody! O, I can't go—I ain't ready! Mr. Sargent — O, my God!—promise me—promise—promise—"

"I do, Lefty! I do—I do promise! The Lord be my witness—"

The dying man, with some reminiscence of a cradle-side prayer, raised his life-scarred hands and laid them together. "For Christ's sake, amen," he whispered, and breathed no more.

As the buckboard went slowly homeward with its freight, the dim light of Christmas morning wrought pallidly upon the plain. It sought out and touched upon the face of that patient care taker, never eloquent as now in its voicelessness.

When Clark came to his own door it was broad day. But Lefty's Christmas was spent otherwhere.—Washington Star.

Christmas in the Past.

The father of the boy or girl of today can well remember, if he has reached the age of forty or upward, a time when Christmas had practically no existence for him. In certain parts of the country, indeed, Christmas has never been forgotten. In New York City, in Pennsylvania, and in the South generally, Christmas, as well as Easter, has always been observed. In New England, however, in many of the rural parts of New York, and in portions of the country which were settled from New England and from rural New York, Christmas was, forty years ago, but a name.

Some trace of it seemed to have survived in the occasional practice of hanging up the stocking on Christmas Eve. Boys and girls often hung their stockings by the fireplace, and in the morning, if they were fortunate, there was in each stocking a store of nuts, a little candy, and perhaps a jack-knife or a thimble. But next day—Christmas Day—the boys and girls went to school as usual, and fathers and mothers went about their usual tasks. There was no holiday and no big Christmas dinner.

The one feast of the year had been eaten at Thanksgiving. The mince pies accumulated for that festival were still making their appearance upon the family table; and the pies, and the memory of all the other good things and sports of Thanksgiving, had to serve the children of that period, as far as holidays were concerned, until Fast Day came round again.

In most of the States, indeed, the children had not even Fast Day to look forward to. There was no real holiday until the Fourth of July. For them there were practically but two holidays in the year.

The recollections of Christmas which a person of fifty should undertake to relate to his children would be very much like the celebrated chapter about the snakes in Ireland, which simply stated that there were no snakes in Ireland. He might, however, have a vivid recollection of a rather lonesome ten minutes spent in hanging a woolen stocking by a fireplace, during which time his parents sat solemnly by, looking as if they did not altogether approve what he was doing. The joy with which he might anticipate a possible gift was tempered not a little by the remembrance of one Christmas morning when he arose eagerly, searched his stocking, and found nothing whatever in it.

Very soon, however, the real Christmas began to grow up, as it were. The most powerful agency in making its observance general was the Sunday-school. Always on the lookout for something with which to arouse the interest of children, the Sunday-school of thirty years ago early made choice of Christmas. "Trees" were introduced as a feature of an annual observance, and many little gifts were distributed.

It was customary to have the passages in the Gospels relating to the birth of Christ read aloud by one of the pupils of the Sunday-school who could read well, and this office was greatly coveted. The chance of being selected to read these passages aloud at Christmas was a sufficient incentive to many pupils to pay particular attention to their reading lessons at school for months together.

The interest of the children in these exercises was very great from the start, and it soon drew the older people into an almost equal interest in the revival of the old festival. In a surprisingly short time Christmas had become the most important day in the year.—Youth's Companion.

Greens for Church Decoration.

People used to be rather more particular than they are now as to what greens they used for church decoration. The favorite plants were holly, bay, rosemary, and laurel. Ivy was objectionable because it was formerly sacred to Bacchus. Cypress was sometimes used, but its funeral associations made it out of place at so festive a season as Christmas. Mistletoe was excluded because it was sacred to the Druidic religion, and perhaps because it was considered too frivolous in its suggestions. The decorations should properly remain in the church till the end of January, but must be cleared away before February 2, Candlemas Day. The same is true of private dwellings, for superstition regards it as a fatal omen if this period is overstepped.—New York Sun.

Do not seek for silence on Christmas Day. Remember that even in poetry, Christmas inspires such rhymes as boys, toys and noise.

AROUND THE YULE LOG.

Under the mistletoe she stood,
And yet he never kissed her!
She was awfully sweet and pretty, but—
She happened to be his sister.

SOMETHING MISSING.

Huggins—"Did your fiancee's Christmas present please you?"

Kissam—"It was very fine. She made it herself, but there seems to be something missing."

Huggins—"What?"

Kissam—"A diagram explaining its use."

A FORECAST.

"Papa won't buy me a bow-wow," cried the little daughter of a very rich man.

"Don't cry, dear," said her mother, soothingly; "when you are grown he will buy you a puppy with a title."

A GENEROUS CHILD.

Mamma—"Tommy, what are you going to buy mamma for her Chriamas gift?"

Tommy—"Why, momsy dear, I've thought and thought about that, and decided that the best thing I could get for you would be a pair of new skates for your little boy."

HIS DISPOSITION.

Wife (sweetly)—"And what shall I get my dearie for a Christmas present this year?"

Husband (grimly)—"Oh, some small, cheap trifle."

Wife—"Oh! You are awfully modest, aren't you?"

Husband—"No. Awfully poor."

TOO GOOD TO LAST.

It isn't strange at Christmas time we find the moments fly;
Then everybody is lovely and the mistletoe hangs high.

Old Christmas Carols.

The earliest collection of Christmas carols was published in 1521. Many are little more than drinking songs used at social or religious festivities, of which singing and dancing then formed a prominent feature. In one old legend a jolly knight is made to say:

"Not a man here shall taste my March beer
Till a Christmas carol he doth sing;
Then all clapt their hands, and shouted and sung,
Till the hall and the parlor did ring."

Indeed, the burden of many a carol might be condensed into "plum pudding, goose, capon, minced pies and roast beef;" and everybody was expected to indorse the sentiment expressed a couple of hundred years ago in "Poor Robin's Almanack:"

"Now, thrice welcome, Christmas
Which brings us good cheer,
Minced pies and plum pudding,
Good ale and strong beer;
With pig, goose and capon,
The best that may be,
So well doth the weather
And our stomachs agree."

No less characteristic is the quaint

Nowel—el el el,
Now is wel that evere was woo,

or

Now make we myrth,
For Crystes byrth,
And sing ye yole till Candlemes.

while the innate sweetness of

God rest you, merry gentlemen;
Let nothing you dismay;
For Jesus Christ, our Saviour,
Was born upon this day.

and of Herrick's "Star Song," and similar carols, can never be lost.

Christmas-Day Thoughts.

Santa Claus is a curious old gentleman. He will not enter a chimney unless it soots him.

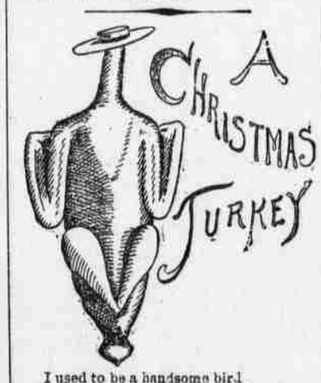
That it is better to give than to receive is proved by the fact that the custom of giving at Christmas has outlived the custom of receiving at New Year's.

Utility should not always be the guiding factor in the selection of a gift. A ton of coal is always useful, but hardly appropriate to send to your best girl.

There are some people who would be dissatisfied on Christmas morning if Santa Claus had dropped the earth into their stockings the night before. Fortunately their number must always be limited, because very few people wear stockings sufficiently large to accommodate so extensive a present.

Early Celebration of the Nativity.

Away in the first century there are indications that the Nativity was celebrated by the early Christians. Though the date of Christ's birth is only traditional, the 25th of December is believed to have been appointed in the fourth century, by Julius I., Bishop of Rome, as the anniversary of that event. Previously the Eastern Church had observed the 6th of January in special commemoration of the appearance of the Star which guided the Wise Men to the Saviour's birthplace in Bethlehem. For a while the Eastern Church adhered to this date, in spite of Julius's edict, though the Western Church observed the 25th of December. This had a natural tendency to extend the festival over the time intervening between the two dates. In the sixth century all Christendom united upon the observance of the 25th of December.



I used to be a handsome bird
With feathers black and yellow,
And wattle red. Upon my word
I was a gallant fellow.

I walked the barnyard with a strut,
And when I fell to drumming,
The little girls would run and cry—
"Look out! the gobbler's coming."

And when I spread my handsome tail,
With pride and joy unfilling,
No ship that floats upon the sea,
Had finer rig for sailing.

Alas! my gobbling days are done;
My fate is sad and murky—
I am that poor, picked, naked thing,
Known as—"a Christmas turkey."

—Pearl [illegible].

AGRICULTURAL.

TOPICS OF INTEREST RELATIVE TO FARM AND GARDEN.

CARE OF ONIONS.

As soon as the tops dry down the onions should be pulled and then left on the ground, exposed to the sun and wind for a few days to dry. Care must be taken not to bruse them in handling. The loose outer layers should also be retained to act as protection. Onions require to be kept in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place. If stored in the cellar the floor of the bin should be several inches from the floor, as onions have the power of drawing dampness. They should never be piled in deep layers. It is impossible to keep onions which have once begun to make a new growth.—New York World.

COOKING FOOD FOR PIGS.

Pigs are the most nearly like a man as to feeding and digestion of food of all other animals. That is, they will do better on cooked food, for this reason, than other animals. There is less waste, the foop is cleaner, and it is better digested. A convenient way is to set a large rustless iron kettle in a stone fireplace and boil the potatoes or roots given to them with corn ears until the whole becomes a stiff mass when it is cold. This is fed in this condition, and is all eaten clean, most of the cobs of the soft corn being eaten and digested. Soft corn really fattens better than hard or ripe grain. Any kind of grain may be fed in this way without grinding, and the cooking costs less than the grinding will. In feeding all kinds of animals it is to be taken into account that when the food is such or in such a condition that the flow of saliva is the most abundant, the digestion of it is the most nearly perfect. In fact, the mouth is the first of the digestive organs, and the saliva secreted in it is the first solvent of the food. So that the more the food may be masticated before it is swallowed, the more economical will be the feeding. Fed in this way, one pound of dry matter will make a pound of dressed pork.—New York Times.

A CLEAN AND SECURE WELL HOUSE.

The advantages of a tight, well-made well house are so many that it is a wonder that so few are seen upon the farms of the land. They shelter the pump and make its period of usefulness much longer than where it is exposed to the weather, and they especially aid in keeping the pump from freezing in winter. Moreover,

A WELL-PROTECTED PUMP.

where cattle or horses are watered at such a pump, they oftentimes set their noses into such contact with the spout that one's pleasure in drawing drinking water from the same channel is lessened, to say the least. Such a house as is shown in the illustration is inexpensive, but capable of serving its purpose admirably. It is just large enough to enclose the platform of the pump, and is constructed of matched boarding, nailed upon a light frame, two-by-two stuff being sufficiently stout for this purpose. A trough is located outside, which keeps the pump, and the platform of the pump, entirely out of reach of cattle or horses.—American Agriculture.

WINTER CARE OF COWS.

It is quite possible that close confinement of the dairy animals during winter will enable the dairyman to force a greater production of milk and butter, and will result in some saving of food and so in greater economy of production. But it is a question whether this saving is not more than offset by the impairment of vitality that must naturally result from such treatment. A human being who was cooped up in that manner would have little ability to resist the attacks of disease, or to stand any accidental exposure, or severe climatic change. It is not wise to expose cattle unduly to the elements, and comfortable winter housing is a very direct road toward increased profits from all kinds of stock. But a judicious owner will see to it that his care of them is such as tends to promote health and to prolong life, as well as to make the immediate yield from them greater. This may be accomplished by giving good housing and protection, and at the same time giving them a chance to get out into the fresh air and sunlight for at least an hour each day. Possibly this might be omitted when the weather is exceedingly cold or stormy, for such exposure is never profitable. But in ordinary weather this hour out of doors should not be neglected. Inside the stables there should be good ventilation at all times, and this in connection with the outdoor exercise will be pretty certain to keep the stock in good condition and sufficiently hardy.—New York Observer.

CHARACTERISTICS OF DORKINGS.

This breed of fowl is older even than the English Nation, by which it is considered the ideal table fowl. In fact the breed is so popular in that country that it is generally regarded as an English breed of fowl. There are four varieties of the Dorkings, viz.: Gray, silver gray, white and cuckoo. The cocks of the gray variety have either a pure black or slightly mottled breast, the neck and back being white, striped with black, and the wings nearly white crossed by a well-defined black bar. The silver grays are always alike in color, the male having a black breast, white wings crossed by a black bar and a black tail. The head, neck and back are pure silver white, without sign of yellow or straw color.

The white Dorking is not quite so large as the other varieties which it is considered to surpass in symmetry. Its plumage is pure white and it possesses what is known as "rose comb," the others having a somewhat larger single comb. The cuckoo Dorkings have a peculiar plumage, consisting of a marking of bars or pencilings of dark blue gray on a ground of lighter gray. In size it is slightly larger than the white, but smaller than the other varieties.

Dorkings have full, broad breasts, broad backs, short legs and are rather short in the neck. They have five toes on each foot. The male bird in good condition will weigh twelve pounds, and the hens nine pounds. They are fair layers, good mothers, mature early and grow rapidly. The great objection is the delicacy of the young birds, which renders raising them difficult. The climate, or the soil, or both, in many parts of the United States does not seem to agree with them. This may, however, be due to too much inbreeding, as fresh blood is difficult to procure.

DORKINGS.

Dorkings can only be successfully raised on a dry soil, dampness being peculiarly fatal to them. They also require a wide range. The Dorking is not exactly suited to the requirements of the American market, its shanks being white, while we generally prefer yellow ones. Its skin is also white or pale yellow, instead of the gold color usually demanded; but for the production of cross-breed fowls for the table it should prove of great value.—New York World.

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

It pays to consider mutton first and wool afterward.

Potash may be had in wood ashes and muriate of potash.

Tillage should be begun just as soon as the ground is dry enough in spring.

A stable should be so built that a horse would not need to stand blanketed.

Good drainage, natural or artificial, is essential to success. Trees are impatient of wet feet.

It is not wise to make a horse so tender that he will be liable to colds and discomfort when taken out.

Well-drained lands are dryer in wet spells and moister in dry spells than other lands. They can be worked earlier in spring.

If a man is a good grass and grain grower, he would better manufacture these products into meat upon his farm, that he may have the ultimate profit from both branches of his business.

Stock raisers have the matter of prices in their own hands to a greater degree than any other class of farmers, for by good selection and feeding they can produce just what the market wants.

There is danger that more head of cattle will be kept than can be well fed. Only the farmer who has outside range of lands in excess of his needs for tillage should endeavor to raise all his calves.

When all orchardists recognize the necessity of spraying the fruit trees, the large crops of fruit will be had again which we were accustomed to before fungi, codlin moths, etc., were as destructive as they are at the present day.

Geraniums not required in pots through the winter may be turned out of them, packed closely in a box of earth and kept in a cool cellar all winter. Give them scarcely any water, or it will start them growing, which is not desirable.

Do not trim the shrubs after midsummer or there will be no flowers next year. It is the wood of this season which flowers next year, and this must not be lost. Pruning should be done immediately after it has commenced flowering.

If one plant among many more of the same kind shows a disposition to bloom earlier than the others, seeds should be saved from it, as it is often possible to fix a character such plants seem inclined to assume. Many a valuable race has been started in this manner.

In the attempt to renovate an old farm which one has recently bought, on which there may be many washed and impoverished spots, do not put the available manure on these, but go to work systematically and improve one field at a time, so that it will yield a paying crop. Fertilize one field well and then extend to other fields.

Much garden work done in the fall is so much saved from spring. One of the important operations is the application of manure to fruit and ornamental trees, small fruit, asparagus, rhubarb, etc. Manure is cheaper and in less demand than it will be in the spring. Furthermore, the fall is really the most fitting season to put it on.

A colt four months old should be taught to eat oats and bran with the dam, then weaned. His ration after weaning may be three pounds cut clover hay, one pound good oats, three pounds wheat bran, one-fourth pound linseed meal. Moisten the cut clover, then mix all together, and feed half morning, the other half at night.

Many gardens with heavy soil will be improved by fall plowing. It is dry now and the work can be well done. The ground will be left loose, so that it can be worked earlier in the spring than otherwise. Of course a thorough cleaning should be given the garden. All the weeds, trimmings of trees, etc., should be collected in a heap and burned, for it is well known that the eggs and larva of insects harbor in such truck.